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ABSTRACT

This book examines charter school accountability in theory and in fact. It attempts to explain how new forms of accountability for public education actually work. Information comes from a study of 150 schools and 60 authorizing agencies in six states (Arizona, California, Colorado, Georgia, Massachusetts, and Michigan). Extensive case studies of internal accountability relationships were conducted in 17 of the 150 schools. These data were supplemented with data from a nationally representative survey of charter schools. Chapter 1, "Charter Schools and Accountability," introduces the issue. Chapter 2, "Charter Laws and Politics," focuses on constraints and opportunities for accountability, four charter school theories, and inconsistent laws. Chapter 3, "Internal Accountability," discusses internal accountability, governing boards, accountability to families and teachers, and relationships with authorizers. Chapter 4, "Authorizing Agencies," looks at charter authorizing agencies starting from scratch. Chapter 5, "Accountability to Others," focuses on voluntary associations and involuntary relationships. Chapter 6, "Recommendations," discusses how key actors can improve school accountability. Chapter 7, "Learning from Charter School Accountability," explains why chartering needs standards, what chartering can add to standards-based reform, and redefining accountability in public education. (Contains 67 endnotes.) (SM)



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